

Karianta (Kari) McCaw
30 Diamond Ave, Unit 13
Plainville, CT 06062
2/17/2022

RE: Department of Education's Legislative Agenda

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Kari McCaw, from Plainville, CT. My daughter attends CREC Discovery Academy – one of the CREC Magnet schools in Wethersfield, CT. I am asking you to please support an increase in the RESC state magnet grant.

My child has excelled during her time at Discovery Academy, which she did not attend until second grade. At that time, there had been a vote in our town to decrease the Board of Education budget and I was afraid that some of the resources that my child benefitted from were going to be cut. My daughter suffers from anxiety and when she was a student in our town, looking different than most of the other people in her class upset her. I can relate since my childhood educational experience was the same. Feeling isolated and one of a few, or the only one in class can be hard on a child's emotional well-being. At CREC Discovery Academy, my child does not suffer from this problem, since she sees students, teachers, and administrative staff that share her ethnicity.

Another great thing about CREC Discovery and CREC, in general, is their ability to be flexible and meet the needs of their students effectively. Last year, my daughter attended the Distance Learning Academy which CREC created. She completed her 4th-grade curriculum entirely online and received an excellent education. With my daughter's anxiety and history of asthma, it was best that she was not in school during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and CREC made that possible. In addition, they held a summer school program which allowed her to ease back into the schoolroom format ahead of her 5th-grade year.

In addition to diversity and flexibility, CREC Discovery also affords my child an excellent education. She enjoys learning through hands-on experiences, especially in her coding class and design lab. Add to that, the fact that she is learning to play guitar excels at math, and enjoys reading all genres of books – even the local newspaper, speaks to the ability of her teachers to engage her. She is also very excited to attend a CREC magnet middle school, focused on STEAM and innovation.

Our magnet schools are at risk and need to be adequately funded. Please continue to fund the schools, increase the budgeted amount and continue to support our schools and students. They are our future, and we want them to be well prepared to excel and care for the world at large.

Sincerely,
Karianta McCaw